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OBSERVATIONS ON

PLAUTINE PROSODY.

BY

WILHELM WAGNER, Ph.D.

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OBSERVATIONS
ON SOME
DISPUTED POINTS OF PLAUTINE PROSODY,
SUGGESTED BY THE SECOND VOLUME OF
‘RITSCHL’S OPUSCULA.’

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NOTHING is more annoying to a scholar, both in Germany and much more in England, than the disagreeable certainty that, about almost every subject connected with classical philology, there exist one or more small German publications, be they in the shape of a *program* of a gymnasium or a university, or in that of a dissertation written for the purpose of obtaining a degree. The number of these publications is daily increasing; and though it may be readily granted that one half of them is worthless, and may therefore be disregarded by others attempting the same subject; yet it is not less certain that the other half is really valuable, and deserves to be taken into account by subsequent inquirers. But the difficulty is how to obtain these publications,—a difficulty on which I need not dwell, as no doubt there are few scholars who have not experienced it. Of late this difficulty has been felt in Germany too, and various ways have been devised in order to facilitate an acquaintance with such programs and dissertations as are likely to influence scholarship even beyond the narrow circle for which they were originally intended. The most effectual, and, as it seems to me, the most successful of these devices, is the

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collection entitled *Studien zur griechischen und lateinischen Grammatik*, edited by G. Curtius, two stout numbers of which have already made their appearance, containing some valuable disquisitions on various points of Latin and Greek philology.

The difficulty of obtaining the programs of German Universities was, perhaps, most keenly felt by the student of the Latin language and literature as to all those subjects on which Professor Ritschl had written, he being undoubtedly a great authority on anything he undertakes to investigate, and, moreover, *the* authority on all points of the Latin language, and especially on Plautus and Inscriptions.

It cannot, therefore, be otherwise than positively delightful to scholars to hear that a complete collection of Professor Ritschl's *Opuscula Philologica* is now in course of publication by the enterprising firm of Teubner, at Leipzig. Two volumes of these *Opuscula* have already been published in two successive years, so that there seems to be no want of energy either on the part of author or publisher.

The first volume (1867, 851 pp.) is exclusively devoted to Greek literature; and, though it is full of the most important investigations, many of which have already taken their place among the recognized masterpieces of philological criticism, and are deservedly recommended as instructive specimens of sound philological inquiry and method, yet I shall not venture to offer any remarks concerning the subjects treated in it, as I intend to confine myself to the second volume, which contains *Opuscula ad Plautum et grammaticam latinam spectantia*.

According to the preface to the first volume, it was Ritschl's intention to reprint his various philological papers without adding much new material, appending only here and there a note to say what his present opinion was with regard to the subject in question, in all cases where other scholars have put forth different views, or the author himself had found it advisable to modify his own opinions. But in the preface to the second volume, Ritschl apprises his readers of a change in this respect. "The motive for this," he says, "should be found

in his (the writer's) personal near relation to all questions concerning Plautus:" in other words, Ritschl has so completely identified himself with Plautus, and feels so well that posterity will consider his edition of Plautus as the work of his life, and judge him by it, that he cannot but enter again upon all these questions which concern him so nearly, and on the unravelling of which he has spent so much heavy labour and thought; and this all the more, as his edition and the very principles of his criticism, have been recently attacked by scholars of all shades,—some even his own pupils,—and without any difference of nationality, in Germany, France, and England. Then, when many spoke about subjects which Ritschl, so to say, considers to be his own domain, he felt unable to keep silence any longer: *αἰσχρὸν σιωπᾶν, Ἰσοκράτην δ' ἔαν λέγειν*. It will, therefore, be seen that Ritschl's second volume contains, to all intents and purposes, his authentic 'last words' about all questions of dispute in Plautine criticism which are mentioned in it—and there are not many that are *not* mentioned.

It is a well-known fact, that Ritschl's edition of Plautus is as yet only a torso. Why it must be so, I believe I have stated in the Introduction to my edition of Terence, p. 12 *seq.*, and I here repeat the statement there given:

"Ritschl himself had not arrived at sound views on archaic prosody when writing his prolegomena to Plautus; and it was only during the progress of his edition that the necessity of a strictly historical investigation into the whole subject forced itself upon him. The consequence was, that his edition came all of a sudden to a standstill, and all his energies were for the next six or seven years devoted to a complete collection of the most ancient Latin inscriptions, arranged in chronological succession so as to form a perfectly trustworthy history of the language from the oldest times down to the death of Cæsar."

In the preface to the second volume of his 'Opuscula,' Ritschl himself grants that his Prolegomena are far from exhausting the subject of Plautine prosody and metres, and that, partly through himself, partly through the investiga-

tions of others, many views propounded in the 'Proll.' have been "modified and rectified, extended to a larger field or restrained to smaller limits, refined or restricted, placed under new points of view or brought into a different connexion, but without losing the foundation" laid in the 'Proll.' But this continual progress and advance in sound views concerning these subjects, though intelligible enough to 'esoteric' circles, necessarily produced an impression of fluctuation and changefulness in the minds of others: and thus it was that an opinion gained ground that Ritschl's views concerning Plautine prosody had undergone a complete change; and this statement, or something very much like it, was also given by myself in various places of my Introduction to the 'Aulularia,' e.g. p. xv and xxiii. note 1. If I have overstated the case in these two passages (which I do not believe I have), there can at least be no doubt that I was perfectly justified in speaking (p. lxiii) of 'the gradual development' of Ritschl's investigations.

Well, Ritschl claims to have only modified and rectified the views propounded in the Prolegomena, without giving up any of his fundamental theories and views as developed there. Unfortunately, even the simple process of modification and rectification involved such a great change in Ritschl's criticism of the text, that the different plays began to show very evident traces of this change of opinion. To give two instances: Ritschl was originally of opinion that the datives *mihi*, *tibi*, *sibi* were admissible only as pyrrhicks throughout Plautus except in the *cantica*; but this doctrine necessitated numerous changes of passages otherwise free from suspicion; and it was only in the 'Persa,' i.e. after seven plays had been edited, that Ritschl acknowledged the long quantity of the final *i* in the dialogue. (See A. Spengel, 'T. Maccius Plautus,' p. 56-62, where a very full list of instances of *mihi*, *tibi*, *sibi* is given.) In the second place I will mention the ending *it* in the third person singular of the perfect, which Plautus still uses in its original long quantity—a fact not acknowledged by Ritschl until he edited the 'Pseudulus.' (See Professor Key, Transactions Phil. Soc., 1864, p. 184.)

But there is, after all, an important feature in Ritschl's present views as compared with the doctrine of the 'Proll. ;' and this is admitted by himself to be a real and unmistakeable *change*, i.e. a giving up of a former principle, not merely a modification. This is the doctrine of 'ecthlipsis' or the suppression of radical vowels in disyllabic iambic words, such as *pater*, *domus*, *manus*, *senex*, and others more; and also in such trisyllabic words as *voluptas*, *voluntas*, and *senectus*, which it was proposed to pronounce *pter*, *dmus*, *mnus*, *snex*, *vluptas*, *vluntas*, and *snectus*.

I have treated of this doctrine at great length in my Introduction to the 'Aulularia' (see esp. p. xxxix.s.), and would here add a few words in order to clear the subject from some doubts which still seem to beset it. I am the more inclined to do so, as A. Spengel, in his book 'T. Maccius Plautus,' studiously neglects the doctrine now adopted by Ritschl; and as another Bavarian scholar, W. Christ, does me the honour to consider me as the principal representative of the 'anti-ecthlipsis' theory. ('W. Wagner, in seiner Introduction zur Aulularia, stellt die Kürzung des *as* und *is* in *bonas* und *malis* als feste Thatsache hin, ohne auch nur die Möglichkeit einer Ausstossung des ersten Vocales jener Wörter gelten zu lassen.' *Rhein. Museum*, xxiii. 560.)

Ritschl (Opusc. ii. p. x.) justly says that the giving up of the doctrine of ecthlipsis was due to the perception of two important facts hitherto disregarded by Plautine critics: viz. the frequent dropping of final consonants, and the shortening of long final vowels. These two facts have since then become the two pillars on which the whole fabric of Plautine prosody rests.

To discuss the dropping of final consonants first. There seems to be a satisfactory agreement among scholars of all shades, that a final *s* is frequently dropped: it is, therefore, unnecessary to say anything more on this point. W. Christ, who is, I think, more sceptical on this subject than other inquirers, next proceeds to a final *m*: and there is certainly nothing more frequent in inscriptions than the omission of a final *m* in words where we should expect to find it. (Corssen,

ausspr. 1, 110 ss.; Geppert, *ausspr.* p. 40; Ritschl, *P. L. M.* p. 121; Wagner, *Introd. to Aul.* p. xxx.). But here Christ raises the objection that the epic poets never neglect an *m* before a following consonant, as they do with regard to a final *s*: but, first of all, this objection is not valid, as the prosody of Ennius and Plautus is by no means identical; and what is a peculiarity of Plautus, need not necessarily occur in Ennius. But, in the second place, it may at least be said that the frequent dropping of a final *m*, which is an established fact in the common pronunciation of archaic Latin,—and, let me add, vulgar Latin during all periods,—has left a footprint in the prosody of both Ennius and all subsequent poets, in so far as a final *m* is habitually disregarded before a following vowel. Christ adds that, in Plautus and Terence also, the instances in which a final *m* seems to be dropt in scanning, are capable of another explanation, which is no other than Ritschl's 'ecthlipsis.' Of this I shall speak below.

The third letter which we often find disregarded at the end of words in Plautine prosody, is *d*, and this is admitted by Christ, though with certain restrictions. There can be no doubt that a final *d* was lost in the suffix of the ablative sing., and in all particles and prepositions which were originally ablatives: *hau* is known as another form of *haud*, and in the preposition *apud* the comic poets frequently drop the *d*. (A form *ape* or *apu* occurs in an ancient glossary: *Introd. to Terence*, p. 17.)

But if a final *d* was liable to be dropt, we cannot entertain doubts as to the dropping of a final *t*, both dentals being in archaic Latin of almost equal authority in the 'auslaut:' e.g. *haut* and *haud*, *set* and *sed*, *aput* and *apud*, etc. Christ is therefore quite willing to allow the dropping of *t* in *caput* in such lines as *Merc.* 153, *Curc.* 360, *Persa* 801.

cáput tibi
cáput deponit
cáput ne ardescat

but he doubts the same process with regard to the suffix of the third person singular of the various tenses. It is almost amusing to see how a man in his senses now tries this, now

that, merely in order to avoid admitting a fact which seems to follow almost spontaneously from a well-ascertained tendency of the language at a given period. First of all, Bentley's antiquated doctrine of the greater liberty of the first foot of an iambic or trochaic line is appealed to; then in *erit* and *erat* we are reminded of the ambiguous nature of the liquid *r* in order to make us believe in a contracted pronunciation: this, I suppose, leads to something like *e'at* and *e'it*, but gives me, after all, no distinct idea of a monosyllabic pronunciation. When Milton uses *spirit* as a pyrrhic^h, I do not pronounce *spi'it*, and even if I did, I should still pronounce two distinct syllables. Moreover, notwithstanding all these artificial explanations, Christ is obliged to confess that cases remain in which we have to recognise the dropping of a final *t*, e.g.

dedit mi Trin. 607. Most. 649.

libet licetque . . . Most. 20: a line which the last editor, Professor Ramsay, considered to be unable of scansion.

iubet vos. Poen. Prol. 4.

placet non. Hec. 866.

decet servom. Rud. I. 2, 24.

To assume such pronunciations as *ddit*, *lbet*, *jbet*, *plcet*, and *dcet*, is, of course, a fancy that can only proceed from a diseased brain: and yet these things have been put forth by more than one scholar!

These (*s*, *m*, *d*, *t*) are the letters which Christ admits to have been dropt in the pronunciation of the time of Plautus, a pronunciation of which the poet's metres and prosody are only a faithful representative. But as to others, Christ entertains grave doubts, *i.e.* he does not admit that *r*, *l*, and *n* are dropt before following consonants. *r* is, however, more than once dropt in *pater*, *soror*, *color*, *amor*: Christ speaks of *pater* as having a monosyllabic pronunciation *patr*, which he supports by quoting an inscription (C. I. L. n. 130) in such lines as

pater venit Ter. Phorm. iv. 2, 11.

né tibi aegritúdinem, pater, párerem Trin. 316.

and others like them. For *soror* he again assumes a monosyllabic pronunciation, I should think somewhat like the

French *sœur*, cf. *consobrinus* instead of *consororinus*; but then what about *color* and *amor*? The French *couleur* and *amour* will not help us in the least; for the first, we might suppose a pronunciation *coor*; but is the second to lose its radical vowel by making it *'mor*, or is the second syllable to be cut short by introducing an unpronounceable *am'r*, or are we finally to consider the ambiguous nature of the liquid *m*, and assume a form *aor*? I purposely enumerate the various possibilities which might suggest themselves to fanciful minds; but if one comes to ask for any real foundation in given facts, there are none to support any of these extravagant suppositions. Now what on earth is the use of assuming possibilities which, at the very best, are capable of support only by some far-fetched analogies of modern languages, or doubtful etymologies of other words?

All will look different as soon as we simply fix our thoughts upon the simple *fact* that *r* can actually be proved to have been dropt in undoubted instances. First of all, it should be observed (see also *Introd. to the Aul.* xxxii.) that *r* in numerous cases only represents an older *s*; and if the *s* could be dropt in *honos*, why should not *honor* be liable to the same loss of its final *r*? But, again, we find *maio* and *mino* in the inscriptions, instances which go far to prove the possibility of a pronunciation *soro*, *colo*, *amo*. And having got so far, and taking the evidence of the Inscriptions, together with the peculiar prosody of these words in Plautus—facts mutually supporting and elucidating each other—we may well be allowed to avail ourselves here of a kind of evidence which bears only a secondary character, and should, therefore, be used only when supported by some other evidence of higher character, I mean the so-called ‘vulgar Latin,’ on which we have now Schuchardt’s very valuable work, the rich materials of which have become accessible to practical use since the appearance of the third volume, which contains the Indices. Vulgar Latin can be proved to coincide with archaic, *i.e.*, Plautine Latin, in many instances; and this is only natural, as archaic Latin is nothing but the vulgar Latin of the period when Plautus and Terence and their contemporaries wrote;

and the same tendencies and principles of development as are seen at work 200 and 150 years B.C., continued their work until the final downfall of the Roman Empire and language, when they formed most important factors in the growth of the so-called Romance languages. But as we have here at the very least a period of 700 years, it would be preposterous to assume at once that any form which we find in vulgar Latin of (say) 300 or 400 A.D., may forthwith be considered as that very form which Plautus and his contemporaries were familiar with. Seen from this point of view, I must say that the longer I speculate on the assumption that in Plautus *soror*=*sœur*, the more do I wonder that anyone should ever have accepted it, except as an expedient to facilitate the scanning of Plautine lines to those who did not care to study the matter in a historical spirit. But if the defenders of the theory really ever meant to teach us that Plautus actually pronounced *sœur*, and no otherwise, I confess that I am fairly puzzled to understand how they could ever find others to accept and support and repeat their theory. But I do not mean to avail myself of the Romance languages for my present purpose—though I might quote the Italian *suora* to prove an archaic pronunciation *soro*;—but, as I said before, I turn now to vulgar Latin. Schuchardt states (vol. i. p. 35) “The final *r* of nouns of the third declension was frequently dropt:” in illustration of which he quotes the confusion between *dolus* and *dolor* at the time of St. Austin, which becomes intelligible as soon as we recollect that these two words were then pronounced *dolu* and *dolo*. Again, (vol. ii., p. 390), Schuchardt gives us from inscriptions the very forms we want for our purpose: *pate* and *soro*, the latter even in five instances. If, after such proofs, there can still be any doubt as to the admissibility of the pronunciation *pate*, *soro*, *colo*, *amo*, *mise*, in Plautus and Terence, I can only say that I am at the end of my arguments.

I will now proceed to the letter *l*, which I hold to have been dropt by Plautus and Terence in the words *simul* (*semol*) and *procul* (see my Introd. to the Aul., p. xxxv.)¹ Christ

¹ *Procul* is found not only in *Capt.* 551, as Christ seems to believe, but also in

assumes here a weakening of the vowel in the second syllable, so as to suppose a pronunciation *sim'l* and *proc'l*, harsh enough for any one, and incredible, as it seems to me, on account of its uncouthness, if of nothing else. For the same reason, I object to the unpronounceable form *prcul*, and to *smol*, in which we have a form beginning with a combination of letters generally avoided by the Romans in the 'anlaut.'

The letter *n* is dropt in the word *tamen* by both Plautus and Terence; and indeed Festus, p. 360, says distinctly, 'antiqui *tam* etiam pro *tamen* usi sunt,' but unfortunately the instances adduced by him do not bear this out: (see Corssen, *krit. Beitr.*, p. 273-279). But the Ambrosian Palimpsest gives *tam* in a bacchiac tetrameter, (*Stich.* 44,) where all the other MSS. read *tamen*, and we may safely rely on the evidence afforded by *tamen etsi* as compared with *tametsi*, in order to prove that, after all, Festus's assertion is right, though not supported by himself as it ought to be. It may further be observed that there are several passages in Plautus where *tamen* occurs, and where the lines appear to be encumbered with more syllables than are required by the metre; but the difficulty disappears as soon as we substitute the shorter form *tam*. An instance of this is given by Ritschl himself. (*Opusc.* ii., p. 244).

In the preceding account of the dropping of final consonants, no mention is made of the various monosyllabic words, most of them prepositions, which are all occasionally shortened in comic prosody, though followed by words beginning with consonants. Such words are *ab*, *ad*, *an*, (*Persa*, v. 3, 14), *ex*, *et*, *est*, *in*, *id*, *ob* (?), *hoc*, *hic*, even *haec* and *has*; and I think we shall not be far wrong if in these words also we assume the dropping of their final consonants in all cases where it facilitates the scanning.

But to return to the doctrine of 'ecthlipsis,' I have first to observe, that all the words which have hitherto come under our notice, are disyllabic (excepting, of course, those mentioned in the last paragraph, in which the assumption of

Glor. 357, where we should read—"age, nūnciam insiste in dolos: ego á te procul recédam."

ecthlipsis is an impossibility); and most of these disyllables, again, are of iambic measure. In all these words we are called upon to disregard the radical vowel. In my Introduction to the 'Aulularia,' p. xxxix, I had absolutely denied the possibility of extruding a radical vowel in disyllables. I was at the time aware that Professor Key more than once assumes compressions of original disyllabic forms into monosyllables, in order to support his etymologies of Latin words; but this did not seem to me to have sufficient authority to introduce into Plautine prosody a new element, otherwise not supported by a single fact. But Christ (*l. c.* p. 576) alleges several instances which go, in truth, far to prove that in Latin also an ecthlipsis of a radical vowel has taken place in more than one word. Thus he quotes *glos* as compared with the Greek γάλως; *flos* he proves to be a compression of an original *folos*, comp. *folium*; and *clam* stands for *calam*, comp. καλ-ύπτειν in Greek, and *occultus* in Latin, (in *celare* the short vowel of the base is lengthened, just as we have *dīcere* and *dūcere*, from the bases *dīc* and *dūc*).

But if I can no longer insist upon the utter impossibility of admitting the ecthlipsis of a radical vowel—though I do not think it prudent to assume the existence and (so to say) working power of a process proved only for that period when the language was still forming, in the pronunciation of the Plautine period—I feel bound to attribute all the more weight to the objections which most people will naturally feel against this doctrine when tested by the results it produces. Such forms as *smul*, *sneɹ*, *mnus* are pronounceable by our organs, not by Roman lips; but not even we can pronounce *preul*, *lbet* (= *lubet*, Men. 368), *amr*, *colr*, *memr* (= *memor*, Persa 767), and others besides.

A. Spengel, p. 91, is in favour of extruding the radical vowel in *colunt*, *doles*, *doli*, *dolis*—he ought to have added *modo* and *modis* in order to have this bouquet of pleasing words, *chlunt*, *dles*, *dli*, *dlis*, *mdo*, and *mdis*. Leaving aside what Spengel says concerning the two monosyllables *vel* and *pol*—which he thinks should be pronounced *vl* and *pl* in several instances, all of which fall under different heads—I will here merely

add a few words about the disyllabic forms of *volo* in which Spengel assumes ecthlipsis of the radical vowel. It is of course natural to think at once of the monosyllabic form *vis*, and our first thought will be that this is a compression of a fuller form *volis*. (So Corssen, *Krit. Beitr.*, p. 389, and Christ, *l.c.* p. 576.) But therein we should no doubt be wrong. The second person singular of this verb would not, however, be *volis*, but rather *vilis*, the radical vowel becoming assimilated to that of the suffix: cf. *velle*. This explanation seems to me to be quite admissible, notwithstanding the third person *volt*, instead of which we should rather expect *vilis* or *vilt*, after the analogy of the second person. But in *volt* the simple suffix *t* is added, not *it*: cf. *fert*. *Vilis* was then contracted to *vils*, and hence we get *vis* itself. It appears, therefore, that here also we have no instance of ecthlipsis. (See E. Götze in the 'Studien,' edited by G. Curtius, zweites Heft, p. 185.) It has also been justly observed that a compressed form *vlis* would rather have resulted in *lis* than *vis*.

I need hardly add that all the instances alleged by Spengel for the extrusion of the radical vowel in *volo* and its various forms, are also capable of another explanation by admitting a short quantity of the second syllable.

In treating of the subject of ecthlipsis, I cannot but briefly notice the views of Professor W. Ramsay as put forth in his posthumous edition of the 'Mostellaria.' But before doing so, I wish to say that I am very sorry indeed to find that so distinguished a scholar as Professor Ramsay undoubtedly was, should have been unable to form a just idea of the immense merits of Ritschl's criticism on Plautus. According to Prof. Ramsay, Ritschl only adopts the same principles as Pylades of Brescia, "who considered the simple explanation 'metri causa' a justification for any change he thought fit to introduce into the text, and many of his interpolations were adopted by his successors, and long maintained their ground: others followed in the same direction, until the work of destruction and reconstruction seems to have been pushed to its extreme limit by Bothe and Ritschl." This remark shows that Professor Ramsay knew hardly more of Ritschl's works

than his edition of Plautus—a fact which I consider to be also abundantly proved by numerous passages in the whole work. Had Professor Ramsay taken the trouble to acquaint himself with Ritschl's papers, which are now reprinted in the 'Opuscula,' vol. ii., and were easily accessible to the English editor in the *Rheinische Museum*, he would have found that many of the views which he now puts aside as fanciful or arbitrary, were in reality entitled to his respect, as they are the result of careful thought and laborious study. Besides, one can scarcely think that a scholar is entitled to speak in this strain of a man who is confessedly held to be one of the greatest living philologists, a scholar (I say) who is not even acquainted with the fact that *nunciam*, a word of the most frequent occurrence in Plautus, is always disyllabic, like *quoniam* and *etiam* (see 'Proll.' lxxi. where *Most.* I. 1, 71, is scanned—

moléstus ne sis: núnc iam i rús, te|ámove

as an instance of a hiatus after a long monosyllable), or who thinks it to be 'clearly' unnecessary to make a change in a line like this (*Most.* I. 1, 1)—

quid tibi malúm, hic ánte aedés clamatio est?

or who proposes to scan the line (*Most.* I. 1, 29)—

quo némo adaeque iúventute ex omni Áttica

so that there shall be an anapaest in the third place—an assumption involving the short quantity of the adverbial suffix *e* in *adaeque*; or who recommends a simple transposition in order to get the splendid rhythm in the following line—

tace átque muliebri parcé supelléctili

instead of the genuine order, here also given by the MSS.—

tace átque parce múliebri supélléctili

and other instances more which I will not mention here. And, finally, I may also be allowed to say, that it is sheer rashness to write about Plautine prosody and questions connected with it without knowing Corssen's work on Latin pronunciation. Writing in this way on a subject, without paying proper regard to the labours of others, is, at the very

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best, foolish, as others may have said the same things before you, so that you merely waste your time in going over ground trodden by others; but it generally happens that this proceeding is very mischievous, as it springs from the consciousness of a great and original mind, which can afford to stand entirely on its own feet and draw upon its own resources;—but unfortunately these great minds are often great in their own estimation only, and the world considers their originality in this or that subject, as little better than absurdity. In a very large portion of Professor Ramsay's 'Prolegomena' (p. xvi.–xlix.), he positively wastes time and paper. Had he consulted Corssen, and several of Ritschl's papers on epigraphic subjects, he would have found materials far more valuable than those collected by himself; and besides, what is of far more importance, more than one view to throw light on difficulties which now are only mysteries to his comprehension. Professor Ramsay is, then, of opinion (p. lxxxi.) that 'all the words' in which the chief difficulty of Plautine prosody lies 'were occasionally, in familiar conversation, pronounced "correptim;" that is, the first syllable was almost entirely suppressed in enunciating the word, and thus the dissyllables were transformed into monosyllables.' As concerns the words enumerated by Mr. Ramsay in his first class, I can easily understand his theory, which is then again only the common theory of *ecthlipsis*, necessitating the pronunciations: 'pud, 'mor, b'nus, c'put, c'nem, c'lor, d'mus, 'nim, f'res, f'ras, 'rus, m'nus, m'lus, m'nas, m'ser, m'dus, n'mis, p'ter, p'test, qu'dem, s'nex, s'mul, s'ror, t'men, v'lunt; but in his second class we find, besides others, the forms: *nde* (for *inde* and *unde*), *ntus*, *nter*, *nmpe*, and *mnis*. In all these instances Mr. Ramsay prefers decapitating the words in question to the process of shortening their first vowel. Corssen assumes, in all these words, that the first vowel was 'irrational,' i.e. was only a kind of semi-vowel, such as we have in abundance in English. I believe that this theory is, at the bottom, not very different from my view, that the vowel is actually shortened, by which I can only mean that it is pronounced hurriedly and without its full sound. But there is no doubt

to my mind that anyone who believes in the decapitated forms is, *eo ipso*, obliged to allow a previous shortening of the vowels subsequently dropt. Geppert has contemptuously called these 'irrational' vowels 'consumptive:' and, just as real consumption ends in death, these vowels must finally, sooner or later, disappear; only, as we are surprised to find a man struck dead in the full vigour of life with no apparent disease in him, so we should be the same with regard to the dying out of vowels.

But there is, after all, a great defect in Mr. Ramsay's views, and also in the views of other scholars, about Plautine prosody, inasmuch as they entirely neglect to indicate the general principle which underlies all these discrepancies of the prosody of the comic writers from the ordinary prosody of later writers. Perhaps I am scarcely justified in using this expression, as it is well known that what we are accustomed to call the ordinary or legitimate quantity of a Latin word, is observed in numerous passages both by Plautus and Terence; and that only occasionally are we startled by meeting with exceptions. Numerous as these exceptions are, it is still possible to make changes in almost every place, and so to re-write the Plautine plays in accordance with the common rules of prosody. To do this would be quite perverse; but it would be equally perverse to accept almost anything the MSS. give, and to account for their readings by resorting to impossible contractions or shortenings, such as we find often assumed by that most perverse editor C. H. Weise. It becomes, therefore, an imperative duty to find out a ruling principle to guide us in our estimate of these prosodical abnormalities, and in our criticism of the text. It is my aim in the Introduction to the *Aulularia* to shew that all these changes are wrought by the force of accent, by which a word of originally iambic measure became a pyrrhic, and a word or metrical complex of syllables of originally bacchiac measure was made equal to an anapaest.

That which seems to be the most difficult to many scholars in this theory is the necessity of admitting that such long endings as *ás, ós, és, ís*, should have been used short in

comic writers ; — rather than admit this, they will even pronounce the Latin of Plautus, 200 B.C., as if it were French of 1400 or 1500 years later. With regard to opinions of this kind, I have little to say, but feel bound to observe that those who deny the possibility of these shortenings, are either ignorant of the whole development of the Latin language in respect to the quantity of its suffixes, or else they mistakenly attribute to a facile expedient for drilling the scansion of Plautine lines into the heads of school-boys, the value of a scientific and historical explanation of difficult facts.

[I may here say that I cannot find any new views in Christ's paper on comic prosody, the first part of which has been quoted more than once in the earlier portion of the present paper. I am surprised to see that Christ ascribes so much weight to Bentley's observation as to the first foot of iambic or trochaic lines, an observation justly neglected by Ritschl, but unfortunately again taken up by Spengel. As regards this point, I fully concur with Ramsay's judgment, who observes (p. lxxv.) that Bentley's 'explanation seems altogether fanciful.']

But I am afraid that I have already devoted too much time to the discussion of a subject which may, perhaps, appear to many to be undeserving of it—only, let it be observed that the question here discussed is not merely a single point of Latin prosody, but an important chapter on a peculiar development of the Latin language in a very distinct direction. I confess that I entertain very decided notions on the subject, and cannot even admit that any other opinions have the slightest probability.

From what has been said before, it will be understood what variety must necessarily be found in the prosodiacal observances of Plautus. One observation should be added : not content with using many syllables as short, which were long in later times, this poet occasionally uses many syllables in their original long quantity. As such may be mentioned *a* in the nom. sing. of the first declension and in the neuter plural ; *e* in the ablative sing. of the third declension ; *būs* in the dat. and abl. plural. ; *ōr* in such words as *sorōr* ; *er* in *patēr*,

which occurs long in three passages (Aul. 772; Trin. 645; Poen. v. 5, 15); and especially the endings of the third persons sing. of all tenses and conjugations. From the beginning of his labours on Plautus, Ritschl has always been remarkably shy of acknowledging these long quantities, and even now he does not admit all those which I have mentioned; in the present volume he does not give his opinion with regard to the length of the nom. *a*, which has been established by Fleckeisen for the nom. sing. of the first declension, and by myself for the neuter plural,—though I am afraid that Ritschl would find it difficult to correct all the passages which we have quoted in support of our views. He also questions the length of the ablative suffix *e*, of which I had given numerous instances (*Rh. Mus.* xxii. 113, ss.), though with this reservation, that he would only, in all the places where it occurs, substitute the spelling *ei*: a possibility already pointed out by me in the *Rhein. Mus. l.c.* Ritschl appeals here to the authority of the inscriptions: but after all, the spelling *ei* would be only a graphic expedient to express a long sound fluctuating between *é* and *î*. This is, however, rare in the ablative singular of crude forms of the consonant declension, even in inscriptions (see Bücheler, *Grundriss der lat. Decl.* p. 50), and even in the year 116 B.C. we find in one and the same inscription both *ab fontei* and *ab fonte*, where we may safely assume that *e* was long in the second instance. I do not, therefore, see the absolute necessity of always substituting *ei* for *e* in those passages where Plautus uses the ending long.

There is also another ending which I contended was used long both by Plautus and Terence, namely, the infinitive-ending *erē*. The subject cannot be new to the Philological Society, because Professor Key had brought the same view before its members as far back as 1867, in a paper which is now also reprinted in his *Philological Essays* (see p. 164 sq.) All this is rejected by Ritschl, but after mature consideration, I feel bound to persist in my former opinion. Ritschl objects to the instances in which the ending *erē* appears at the end of the first diameter; and I did not, indeed, attribute any weight

to them, quoting them, as I did, merely in order to observe that the ending in question appears here also to have been long, supposing that we can establish this on the authority of other passages, in which Plautus still uses the word in its original quantity. But I will here confess that I have since then gained the conviction that Plautus never lengthens an originally short syllable in the cæsura. Ritschl, p. 447, reduces my 15 instances of *erē* to no more than 3,—2 from Plautus, *Pseud.* 355, and *Poen.* iii. 3, 15 :

égo scelestus núnc argentum prómerē possúm domo
eum opórtet amnem quaérerē comitém sibi

forgetting, however, a third already pointed out by me in an appendix to my paper, viz., *Truc.*, ii. 4, 74 :—

non aúdes aliquod míhi darē munúsculum.

To which I would now add a fourth, *Cas.* v. 3, 15 :—

núgas istic dícerē licet : hércle invitus vápulo.

(The MSS. have *vapulo hércle ego invitus*, but the first part of the line is given by them without the slightest variation).

Ritschl disposes of these instances in his usual manner, by inserting *hinc* in the first, and *eo* in the second line: in the third, he would doubtless approve of the transposition adopted by the generality of editors: *dáre mihī*, though formerly the iambic measure of *mihī* would have prevented him from doing so.

As concerns Terence, I can give such instances as would satisfy Ritschl from the poet's first play only; and I consider this to be very characteristic, because it seems to show that in Terence's time this quantity had already become obsolete, and that it was not used by the poet in his more polished productions. We have there (*Andr.* 23):

male dícerē, malefácta ne noscánt sua;

but to this we should add (v. 534 s.) :

aliquót me adierunt, éx te auditum qui áibant hodie filiam
meam núberē tuo gnáto : id viso tún an illi insániant.

This is the reading of the MSS., though Fleckeisen changes it in order to avoid the quantity *nuberē* by writing :

qui aibant hodie nubere
meam filiam tuo gnato :

but this change is merely arbitrary.

We have, therefore, six satisfactory instances of this quantity from twenty-one comedies; and a seventh shall be added presently from Plautus. I do not think it is quite fair upon me that Ritschl should in his *Opuscula* hold me up as a specimen of perverse conservatism with regard to the ending *ere*, while one of his favourite pupils, Prof. Bücheler, of Greifswald, shares my offence all the same. But after lecturing me, Ritschl merely adds: "Bücheler has a different opinion from mine" (*Grundr. der lat. decl.* p. 62 s.). I will now copy the passage referred to: "die alte länge der infinitivendung *generē* spürt man noch bei den dramatikern des 6. jahrhunderts, Glor. 848 *nunquam édepol vidi prómerē, verum hóc erat* (one of the instances given by me and Professor Key), wo die winzige rededepause an sich eine unzulängliche entschuldigung der gedehnten endsilbe wäre (but Ritschl considers the pause to be so strong as to be fully equal to those cases in which a syllable is lengthened on account of the change of speakers); Stich. 513 *quám me ad illúm promitterē, nisi nóllem ei advorsárier*; auch in der terenzischen betonung Andr. 23 *male dicerē, malefácta ne noscánt súa*; aber gerade diese beispiele zeigen zugleich, dass bereits die kürze *generē* allgemein herrschte."

On the one hand I am glad to have Bücheler for an accomplice, but on the other, I think that my own statement of the subject in the *Rh. Mus.* was fuller and more accurate. At all events, I am indebted to Bücheler for the instance he quotes from the Stichus.

We have now 7 (or even 8) instances in 21 comedies—not a very small number, considering that there are not many more instances of the long quantity of the nom. *a*, or other peculiarities of Plautine prosody. Should Ritschl persist in correcting them, I would venture to remind him of some of his own investigations: *e.g.*, he traces the old suffix *is* in the nominative plural of the second declension in a very few passages in Plautus, without being induced by their paucity to change the readings of the MSS.; and again he traces five instances in Plautus in which the form *poste* appears, but the preposition *post* occurs in numerous other passages. All this

tends to show that in these things we should certainly not be governed by mere numbers.

I have not yet said anything as to passages of doubtful authority, especially *Glor.* 27:

PY. quid, brácchium? AR. illud dicere volui, femur.

on which Ritschl has a most elaborate excursus (p. 437 ss.), showing, as I think, most satisfactorily that Plautus himself wrote—

quid brácchium? illud 'féminur' volui dicere.

In order to prove the truth of this change, I copy here from Ritschl the parallel cases most to the point (*Most.* iii. 2, 145; *Rud.* ii. 4, 9; *Glor.* 819):

dórmunt?—illúd quidem 'ut confvent' volui dicere.
súbvolturium: illúd quidem 'subáquilum' volui dicere.
quid, sórbet?—illud 'stértit' volui dicere.

Professor Key says that these cases are not parallel (*Phil. Essays*, p. 165), and ventures to assert that when *illud* is used, as in the passage in the *Glor.*, to draw attention to a coming word or words, in opposition to what precedes, it is a law of the language that the word or words so referred to should lie at a distance from the pronoun: for which he quotes his *Grammar*, § 1106. But I think, on the contrary, that the paragraph in his *Grammar* does not apply to the passage in Plautus, and am convinced that the above three instances are quite parallel to that in the *Glor.* and certainly do represent the habit of Plautus.

I will also pass over the passage in the *Asin.* ii. 1, 2, where I do not consider that Ritschl fairly characterizes my criticism, as anyone who will read my remarks in the *Rh. Mus.* may be easily convinced; but I must say a few words as to the fallacy pervading Ritschl's entire argument on this point.

Ritschl argues that though there are so many infinitives in Plautus and Terence, I can find only a few instances of the long quantity of the suffix, and this very fact ought to have made me more cautious in accepting the readings of the passages in question. But before attempting an argument of this kind, Ritschl should first have observed that in more than three-fourths of the lines where we have infinitives, the *e* is

either in thesis—so that we cannot decide whether it be long or short—or it is elided before a vowel, so that again its quantity is left undecided. It is therefore only possible to say anything about the quantity of this ending when the *e* is in *arsi*, a case comparatively very rare. But whenever this happens, I venture to assert that the *e* is almost invariably long. I feel certain that this case is precisely like the ending *it* of the third person perfect, where even Ritschl was at last obliged to admit the long quantity.

In addition to the preceding observations, I would say that it seems to me that the recent investigations, not only of Ritschl himself, but of Fleckeisen, Corssen, and Bücheler, tend to show that it is very dangerous indeed to restrict Plautine prosody to a fixed standard of regularity by giving undue preponderance to those prosodical rules which have in their favour the greatest number of passages, and correcting the smaller number of refractory instances. Yet this is Ritschl's method; and in spite of his own labours, and in spite of the many recantations of former theories which he has been obliged to resort to, such is the force of habit, that even now in many cases he pursues the same tract. Plautine prosody is something irregular, a curious phenomenon in the history of the Latin language. While it contains the germs of the prosody of later times, it shows on one side the vestiges of the original long quantity of many suffixes; and on the other, destruction rapidly attacking these very same suffixes by shortening and curtailing them even beyond the habit of later times. In consistent pursuance of these views, we feel bound to respect the authority of the MSS. much more than Ritschl does. It is true, as Ritschl observes, we have not the poet's works, as it were, engraved in iron or brass by his own hand,—nor has anybody ever gone so far as to maintain that, either in theory or practice;—but still we possess, for Plautus, MSS. not altogether to be despised or thrust aside as useless guides. And after all, it seems to me that our MSS. are better guides in the labyrinth of Plautine criticism than the arbitrary changes of a Professor of the nineteenth century. I willingly submit to Ritschl, as soon as he brings

logical reasoning to bear on single passages; but I see no force at all in the mere aggregation of numbers.

There is another chapter of Plautine prosody on which I would fain say a few words, namely, the influence of accent, *i.e.* how far we are justified in assuming a coincidence of metrical recitation with the accent of Latin words in everyday life. This chapter has now increased in importance, in my eyes at least, as Ritschl has now made it the criterion by which to distinguish the Plautine critic with a call to his task, from the one without a vocation. In speaking of this subject, Ritschl becomes positively eloquent. Accent is to him "the Spirit that moves upon the face of the waters." He is inclined to deal charitably with those Plautine critics who differ from his views: "for they are," says he, "only half responsible, as their failure arises from a defect of nature," and he compares them to those individuals who are naturally destitute of the sense of colour. But to be serious, Ritschl does here little more than declaim in high words. Will this convince any of his adversaries? If nothing else, will not the fundamental "defect of their nature"—which I suppose means their stupidity—prevent them from recanting their error?

But to state the fact, such as it actually is, I must say that among Plautine critics only Ritschl and Fleckeisen hold those views on accent which are here stated to be the criterion for sheep and goats. All the rest are more or less heretics.

I feel, however, that I am unable to do justice to this point in the short space of time before me, and must, therefore, leave it at present without any further comments: but as Corssen's work on Latin pronunciation is just coming out in a second edition, I venture to promise an exhaustive account of this subject in my next reading to the Philological Society.

I feel that I have touched upon only a very few points of Plautine philology, though the volume before me—Ritschl's *Opuscula* ii. — would easily furnish me with materials for a much longer paper. But the best thing I can do is to recommend scholars to study the volume itself. It is not, however, always easy to follow the peculiar development of

Ritschl's arguments, as he prefers placing his various papers before the reader in very nearly the same order and form as those in which they were originally written. In many cases it happens that Ritschl conceives an idea which he then puts forth in a paper; later on, other arguments, either found by himself or suggested by friends, modify his former views. In cases of this kind Ritschl does not change his papers, but leaves it to the reader to find out by himself what is the final truth on the subject. This is nowhere more conspicuous than in the disquisition on the genitives in *ius*, where we begin with the year 1829 and end in 1867, coming to erroneous results at first, and arriving at sound views in the end.

Throughout the whole volume there is a haughty, discontented, and domineering tone. Excepting a few of his pupils, and his friend Fleckeisen, Ritschl affects to despise his successors in Plautine criticism. It is but very rarely that Ritschl can bear deviation from his views, as he had already proved in 1846 by his famous epistle to Schneidewin about Geppert's edition of the *Rudens*. Even in 1868 the crater is not burnt out, but still belches forth volumes of angry fire. This time it is more especially Andreas Spengel, of Munich—a most ingenious critic, but unfortunately in opposition to Ritschl's views—upon whom the cup of Ritschl's wrath is poured. He is taken to task like a schoolboy, charged with mere thoughtlessness (p. 703), called superficial and incapable of judgment (p. 705), and finally told, that whenever he makes a good emendation, or holds the right view, he cannot even be praised for that, as he is somewhat like the blind hen that finds a pearl on a dunghill! According to Ritschl there is no merit in Spengel's emendations and theories, because they are not got at in the right way, and therefore not methodically. This is to my fancy very much like the quarrel between an allopath and homœopath, when the first also may allow that the latter saved the patient's life, but it was by mere chance, and not according to the rules of the craft.

But surely a little more tolerance would not disgrace even a Ritschl. In several places we find that Ritschl

appeals to the judgment of all-powerful time to maintain his own views as the right ones ; but is it wise to do this if his opponents are the young and valiant ? It is always better to fight with arguments than with fine phrases, or, even worse, with abuse ; and I am sorry to say that Ritschl chooses the latter in too many instances. Nobody can regret this more than myself, as I shall never cease to admire Ritschl as a scholar and a teacher. Before my eyes he stands as the lecturer at Bonn, clear, powerful, eloquent, and imparting interest even to the driest subjects, by the consummate art with which he knew how to handle them. I remember how his eyes used to sparkle with delight when he thought that some good work had been done by his pupils, and how delightful it was to hear oneself praised in his sonorous Latin : but woe to him whom he considered deserving of blame ! Then, again, there was the kindly interest shown to his pupils in their private studies, and the advice and help willingly given at any time. As such Ritschl lives in my recollection ; and I venture to say that his writings present a faithful picture of the man, of his good sides and his faults. The first every one will feel obliged to admire and respect ; but the second can be pardoned and overlooked only by those who have cause to love the man and cherish his memory.

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